

Horse Outlived 2 King Caesars

POWDER POINT, Duxbury—On the north shore of the Bluefish River, near where it issues from its deep, fide-cut course into the broad expanse of Duxbury Bay, dark skeletons of elms beckon to the Powder Point road and its handsome houses.



In-Summertime, Fashion gathers on Powder Point, as it has these many years. But in Winter, though some year-rounders dwell there, there is a hollow feeling in the place; almost no life to be seen. Great sheets of ice, cracked and tilted at the slack of tide, encased the river's marshy edge. And tilted, too, it seemed, was a schooner yacht with rakish masts, Wintering at a little wharf.

The Point road soon forks to begin its loop around the almost mile-long promontory. And it was there that I walked just off a few steps into a small side road, Bay Pond st., so that I might read once again (for this, to me, is no strange land) the inscription on a monument to the King Caesars' horse.

Now as I get the story, there were two King Caesars, two Ezra Westons, father and son . . . and the horse served both.

I have mentioned before something of the elder's career—of his rise from poor ships carpenter to great wealth and influence.

He was a stout, but well-made man, it's told, of light complexion and fair hair; an industrious man, resolute in his purpose—and in his later years he possessed a justifiable pride in his accomplishments that led him sometimes to stroll through town in sumptuous attire, carrying a long, silver-headed cane, and accompanied by a gaily-attired slave-boy with silver anklets on his bare feet. That's the story, anyway.

But King Caesar II was born to the purple. By the late 1780's, a few years after his fine marriage with Col. Gamaliel Bradford's daughter, he came into his father's firm. It was in his time, in the 1800's, that the Weston fortunes rose to their peak.

Here on Powder Point were not only the Weston homes, but the Weston wharf to which vessels built in Weston shipyards came to be fitted with gear made in part of hemp brought from foreign ports in other Weston vessels and manufactured into rope at the Weston rope-walk. A Weston mill provided salt for the fisheries. There was a Weston bank, down the road, and a Weston counting-house in Boston.

Ezra Weston Sr. died in 1822, and his son in 1842. Their horse, "Honesty Dick," outlived them both. But though there were only two Kings Caesar, there were other Westons; and it was Ezra the Fourth who erected Dick's memorial.

A column of red brick in a now unkempt plot bears a slate tablet telling that "Here lies buried Honesty Dick, who faithfully served three generations. This Noble Horse was born upon Powder Point A. D. 1817. Here lived and here died 1846."

Ezra also made a poem to Honesty Dick.

Well has he shaken the dust of this weary world from his shoes.
He hath broken the reins that bound him in subjection,
And left behind traces which united him to the load of life.
The wheel of time shall no more revolve for him.
But the vast circle of eternity shall roll above him forever.

Wind was rattling among the few remaining leaves of oak trees as I walked along the river road—or King Caesar road, as its formal name is today. It is the road that follows the bay shore; and a hundred waterbirds took off in squads at sight of the lone figure in the empty scene . . . fleeing into the west with long necks outstretched.

Quickly I came to the King's house—the home into which Ezra Weston Jr., moved from his father's nearby house in 1809. He was I gather, a more retiring man than his extrovert parent; shrewd in business, and a man of good taste.



MONUMENT to "King Caesar's" horse, Honesty Dick, at Powder Point.

The home he built is one of unostentatious richness, simple of line, as so many of the fine old houses of that day are.

The names now at its drive are those of Boston artist Mrs. Elizabeth Weber-Fulop, and Alice Moran.

What was once the Weston wharf, out front, is now a beautifully laid-out memorial park, at which a tablet tells of the Weston dynasty's greatness. "1840 The Largest ship owners in America."

Today the house looks off across the park to an empty bay, which I found filled with silver by the sun. Clark's Island, first landing-place of the Pilgrims in Plymouth harbor, was just a low dark line three miles away at the south. Beyond it the Pine Hills of Manomet were a shadow on a hazy horizon.

Two cars passed as I stood in the little park; and when I went out into the road it was wholly empty again, and remained so. It was just right for walking—the wind cold on it, but at my back.

Beyond the Weston place is the National Sailors' Home—a snug harbor, housed in what once was a building of fashionable Powder Point school, now many years departed. It was a school—a good one—which sought to produce not only educated youths, but young gentlemen.

And the story is told that at a baseball game in 1900 a boy named Wendell Phillips, irked by a decision of the umpire, shouted "Rotten! Rotten!"

"Master Phillips," protested the principal, "couldn't you say de-cayed?"

I went on among the fine houses and came at length to the point's end, whence a half-mile bridge runs to the Duxbury Beach.